

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

230725Z May 05

ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	AIT-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	COME-00
	CTME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	EB-00	EXIM-01	E-00	VC-00
	FRB-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01	JUSE-00	VCE-00
	AC-00	NRC-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	OIC-00	OMB-00	ACE-00
	FMPC-00	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	EVR-00	BBG-00
	IIP-00	DRL-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/002W	

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7709  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L HANOI 001197

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV AND EB  
STATE PASS USTR FOR EBRYAN AND GHICKS  
GENEVA FOR USTR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/23/2015  
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [VM](#) [WTRO](#) [WTO](#)  
SUBJECT: VIETNAM: TRADE OFFICIAL'S FRANK ASSESSMENT OF WTO  
NEGOTIATIONS, MINISTER'S HEALTH

Classified By: Economic Counselor Samuel R. Watson. Reason 1.4(b and d ).

1. (C) During a casual meeting with Econoff on May 20, Mr. Nguyen Hong Duong (strictly protect), Deputy Director of the America's Department at the Ministry of Trade, told Econoff he did not expect major breakthroughs during WTO bilateral negotiations with the United States in Washington June 13-16.

Duong noted that although Vice Minister of Trade Luong Van Tu (the GVN's chief negotiator for WTO) will lead the GVN delegation this time, he doubts the delegation will have authority to make significant concessions. Duong said VM Tu does not have significantly more authority than a director general and WTO decisions are "beyond the Government." Duong speculated that the GVN delegation will come with general instructions for the negotiations but will not have the ability to make tough decisions on specific issues. (Note: Duong does not have primary responsibility for WTO issues. However, he was part of the GVN's negotiating team during negotiation of the U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) and is very familiar with GVN negotiating strategies and constraints. End Note.)

2. (C) When asked about Minister Truong Dinh Tuyen's health, Duong responded that the Minister remains "very frail" and has only been in the office once or twice since getting out of the hospital in late April. It appears the Minister is having difficulty concentrating on briefings provided by his staff. (Note: Minister Tuyen had surgery on his stomach in April after several weeks of hospitalization. There are rumors he was suffering from stomach cancer and had to have two-thirds of his stomach removed. End Note.) Duong said that although the Prime Minister wants Minister Tuyen to accompany him on his trip to the United States in late June, it is unlikely the Minister will be strong enough to travel. It is not clear whether VM Tu will stay in the United States or if America's Department Director Nguyen Cam Tu will travel with the Prime Minister.

3. (C) Bio note: Duong has worked for the Ministry of Trade for about fifteen years. His wife is an "expert" in the textile office of MOT's Export-Import Department. They have two children. Duong's father-in-law Nguyen Dinh Luong retired from MOT with the rank of Assistant Minister in early 2003. Duong speaks excellent English and has a law degree from a university in Moscow. Duong participated in a International Visitor's Program (IVP) last year. Before coming to MOT, he worked for an arbitration board at the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Duong is very frank and outspoken, characteristics which have reportedly hindered his advancement within the Ministry of Trade.

Boardman

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